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853 in the gardens and the baby cries for milk, the infant may
854 be suckled by another woman, if one with milk happens to be present. But this is not done normally, and usually only the mother nurses her child.

852 Within a few weeks after the birth a "doctor" is called to
789 make "medicine" which will make the newly-born infant strong. In Lesu, the doctor for this kind of medicine was the
751 elderly man Tsengali, and this is his medicine. He stands by the *purpura* tree and recites the following spell:—

Strong, strong, strong, strong.
Strong head,
Strong arm,
Strong breast,
Strong stomach,
Strong leg.

The spell contains the wish that each part of the infant's body mentioned become strong. As soon as he has finished his recitation Tsengali takes a small leaf from the tree, chews it, and spits the chewed leaf into a bigger leaf from the same tree, which he folds over it as a cup. Then he pours a little water over the chewed leaf and gives it to the infant to drink. This "medicine" is supposed to have a prophylactic value and prevent the infant from having sores and other ills, and in general to make him a strong child.
[853] There is some idea, which I was not able to understand very clearly, that the mother's milk may become contaminated by the food she eats, and make the infant ill. This "medicine" is supposed to remove any bad effect resulting from impurity in the mother's milk. In discussing this idea, one native who had worked on a white man's plantation told me that a white woman gives her child goat's milk, or tinned milk, to avoid contamination from her own milk. Tsengali is paid two or three strings of *tsera* (shell currency) every time he makes the "medicine."

853 Now that the proper medicine has been made, everyone

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854 of the time he is smiling and cheerful, and apparently thoroughly enjoying the fuss being made over him.

In the hamlet, Penguli, in the life of which I participated most intimately, the youngest infant, Sapirosch, was about six months old when I arrived. She was quite the centre of interest in the community. There was always someone, adult or child (more frequently an adult), making a fuss over her. Every new gesture was reported and commented on. When the baby recognized me for the first time it was news in the community. Before I left she was just beginning to walk, or rather toddle, and this was an event of great importance and much discussed. She had not yet started to talk, but she was just beginning to make a few sounds which the fond parents (like many parents the world over) insisted were intelligible words. It was reported that she spoke my name, although I never heard her utter anything even faintly resembling it.

852 During the first two years of the child's life there are various important rites—when he receives a name, at the appearance of a first tooth, and at a feast for possible mates, and to celebrate his being strong and healthy. About a month after the baby is born a second birth feast is held. This is the larger one promised by the baby's maternal uncle the day after his birth.[1] About a hundred women of both moieties and from the neighbouring villages arrived at Ambwa very early in the morning, an hour or so after sunrise, carrying their taro. They immediately went to the hamlet of the infant Murri, where they sat down and began to scrape the taro and to prepare it to be baked. Women from one place generally sit together, although there is some mingling of women from different localities. Each woman has brought taro from her own garden, and a large amount from the garden of the infant's mother is also available.

[1] Murri was born September 7th. The first feast was held September 8th, and the second one, now being described, took place on October 12th.

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852 Most of the morning is spent in preparing the taro. The child's mother is with the other women from Ambwa working on the taro. The baby is lying on a bed inside the house, and beside him lies his mother's father, who is patting him soothingly and affectionately.

852 252 The women and little girls old enough to be of assistance are busy scraping the skin from the taro with their shell implement (*tsip*), halving them, sprinkling them with shredded coconut and water, and then wrapping eight or ten of them in large leaves, securing the whole bundle by tying it with a piece of hardy vine. At the same time the men make the fires, bring in the leaves for the wrapping of the taro, shred the coconut, prepare a pig, fish, and turtle to be baked. The busiest of all the men are the infant's mother's brother, his grandfather, and his father. It is his mother's brother, or sometimes his maternal grandfather, who is master of ceremonies.

About noon all the preparations are completed. The bundles of taro, fish, pig, and turtle have all been put in the *liga*, a pile of hot stones serving as a bake oven. There are four *liga*, one near each group of women who have been preparing the taro. Many of the women now go in and look at the child. They fondle it, crow over it, and then pass out of the house and sit down at the place where they had previously been working. Now they take their ease. A few doze, others chatter. An old woman from Langania tells how one of her children is very skilful at getting crabs for her. Another one laughs as she tells how her child, who is about three or four years old, said he was an old man. Then they talk a bit about the new baby for whom this feast is being held; particularly about his good health. While they talk they munch a taro which has been baking separately on one of the little fires which are always kept burning, apart from the *liga*. One woman has just lifted a taro from the fire, and beats it with a stick (always done to

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taro which is not cooked in the bundles), and as she beats she tells how she did not want her son to marry because she thought he was too young, but how he did marry anyway. She appears amused with the incident, and tells it rather as a good story, showing no evidence of chagrin.

After about two hours or so of this lazy conversation, fourteen Ambwa women appear in the open clearing in front of the house where the infant now lies. They are gaily decorated with *kerapo* leaves stuck in their hair and in their armbands (*biuk*). Seven of the women belong to the Eagle moiety and seven to the Hawk, and they now do the *Kanduro* dance. It is a dance done in two-line formation; one line is made up of the Hawk women, and the other of the Eagle women. One Eagle woman (same moiety as the infant) leads the others in. She beats a bamboo pole with a stick and stands in front of the two lines of women and addresses the Hawk women in an angry tone: "You Hawk women have come. Now, we have no women. All the Eagle women have died. We have no Eagle men here either." This, I am told, is not true, and everyone knows it. It is just "talk play," a kind of polite depreciation, and is customary at this rite.

Then follows the dance. Maerabit, from Lesu, as usual plays the part of the jester, and rushes on the scene beating a drum, circles around the dancers, and goes through many absurd antics, maintaining a serious countenance at the same time. The effect is quite droll. She has a real sense of gaiety and rhythm in her movements. The audience greets her antics with loud shouts of appreciative laughter.

When the dance is over another group of women of the Hawk moiety, married to men of the clan to which the infant belongs, come on the scene, each carrying some food utensil. One by one they make a speech about the abilities of their husbands as food providers. One woman holds up a basket, saying: "My husband gets much food at

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852 537 feasts. He fills up the basket with the food and gives it to me. Then I eat." Another woman holds up a fishing spear and says: "My husband catches fish with his spear, then he cooks them and I eat." A third woman holds up a knife: "My husband works in the garden with his knife. Now I have planted banana trees. My husband cuts the bananas from the trees. Later I eat them." A fourth woman with no tool says: "My husband does not know how to work. He catches fish, but that is all. I cook them, and then I eat them." A fifth woman speaks: "My husband clears the ground and plants it. He fishes too." These are followed by two longer speeches. One speaks: "I am one person alone. I do not have a brother, and I do not have a mother. If I had a mother and a brother they would help me. But my mother has died, and so also has my brother died. Now if my husband were young he would work in the gardens as he did before, when he was young. In the past he would hunt the bush pig and kill one, and then I would eat pig. But to-day he is old; he sits in the house; now I do not eat pig. Enough, the man is old." After this lament another talks. "Yes, it is true that my husband is a worker. He plants the bananas, and then I cut the bananas from the tree. My husband, he goes fishing, but he does not give me a big fish. I never have the experience of eating big fish. It is always the small fish that are given to me. Now it is true that if I am sick he will plant the taro for me, and so also will he plant the bananas, and bring wood for the fire by the bed to keep me warm while sleeping, and so, too, will he bring me water to drink." This woman gives due credit to her husband for all his virtues, but she seems to have a slight grudge that he does not ever give her a big fish.

852 431 All this time, during the dancing and the speeches, the ten or twelve men present are sitting some distance away. They look on and appear interested, but take no part. But as soon as the women have finished their speeches the

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men immediately become busy distributing the food to them. First, the men uncover the *liga*. With spearlike poles they level the pile of hot stones. Each woman knows just where she has put her own bundles of taro. She takes one of them from the *liga* and gives it to a woman of the opposite moiety, usually one who stands in the *Tamangaina*[1] relationship, who immediately gives her a similar bundle of taro. It is a reciprocal exchange.

After this exchange has been effected the other bundles of taro are removed from the *liga*, opened up and put in one pile in the open clearing in front of the house. Bananas are taken off the stem by the men and arranged in another pile, and the bundles of fish, pig, and turtle are also opened. Each woman puts on the ground either her basket or her mat, which form a long row on the ground between the pile of taro and the pile of bananas. The infant's maternal grandfather then counts a blade of grass for each woman present, putting one blade on each basket and mat to see if the latter correspond to the number of blades of grass he has, which represent the number of women. This is the method of counting. Then four or five men, the leaders of whom are the infant's mother's brother, Murri, and his maternal grandfather, Lorani, divide the taro, fish, bananas, and pig. In each basket, or on each mat, are put ten baked taro, two pieces of fish, a small piece of pig, and about a dozen bananas. The distribution, which is very careful and equitable, takes some time. The women, in the meantime, are sitting around loafing and taking their ease. When the distribution is over Murri makes a short speech to the effect that the feast was held for the new infant. The women are chattering and pay little attention to the speech. Now each woman takes up her basket or mat with the food and carries it to the place where she had been sitting in the morning

[1] This is the term used for her brother's daughter (see terms 22, 23, p. 49).

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when preparing the food. Some of the food has been set aside for the dozen or so men who are present, and they and the young boys now eat together at a place some distance from the women. All of the turtle goes to the men, for no other reason, I was told, than that they like it. It is not taboo to the women. They, in the meantime, eat some of the food and put the remainder in the baskets, with the bundles of taro received from women of the opposite moiety. Then each woman lifts the heavy basket of food to her back, if she has a baby puts him on top of the basket, and trudges home. For those who came from Lesu the distance is three miles, and they arrive home as the sun is setting.

When the infant is born those wishing to give the child their name indicate their desire, and immediately the child will be known by the name, or names. But they will not be considered really his names until after the appropriate feast and exchange of *tsera* (currency) has been made. This occurs some time within the first two months after birth. It is a clan relative—a maternal uncle or aunt or grandmother—who gives the name.

About two and a half months after the birth feast just described a naming feast is held for the same infant, at which about sixty men and boys are present. Unlike most of the men's feasts, it takes place in the open compound of the hamlet, and not in the cemetery. The preceding day the women of Ambwa, assisted by a few from Lesu, cook the taro. The child's mother contributes the pig. Both the men —the maternal uncle and maternal grandfather—who give their names to the infant, have already given one *tsera* (shell currency) to the child, who (through his mother) has in return also given each of them one *tsera*. It is the usual reciprocal exchange. At the feast Kadua, an Ambwa man, makes a long speech, the gist of which is that this is a feast for the naming of the child. Kadua is no kin to

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the child, but talks merely because he is considered a good orator.

The next ritual feast for the infant will be upon the appearance of his first tooth. For little Ongus, sometimes known as Ongus the second, so as not to confuse him with big Ongus, the chief, whose name he carries, a feast is held to mark this occasion. The host is Muhi, the baby's maternal grandmother's brother, a classificatory grandfather (*yaya*). He contributes the pig, the bananas, the tobacco, and the betel-nut. Taro is contributed by the mother of the child, and Brakko, Molung, and Pulong, all women of the opposite moiety from that of the infant, and of the same clan as his father. The latter, Peiwas, contributes bananas.

The affair is a rather small one, with only about twenty men and boys present. They are gathered in the compound, which was formerly the burial-ground for the hamlet of Panat, which has so shrunk in size that it now uses the cemetery of the next hamlet, Penguli, for burials. But the feasts of Panat are always held on its former burial-ground. Muhi is the host, and it is he who distributes the tobacco and betel-nut, real luxuries to the men. It is Ongas, the infant's father's mother's brother's son, who makes a short speech when they have almost finished eating. "We have come here because Ongus the second has a tooth. It is a very small feast, and there is not much food. Now we have finished." Only the men eat at this feast, the women, as usual, preparing the taro. I was told that if the child cutting its first tooth is female, the women, and not the men, would eat. As no female infant in my neighbourhood happened to cut her first tooth during my visit on the island, I was unable to observe the procedure.

Another ritual feast which may be held before the first tooth is cut, or a year or two after the teething stage, is that given for the possible mates of the child. The one I witnessed

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852 was given for Sapirosch, a female infant of about a year, or a little more, and Linga, a little girl of about three years of age, both of the hamlet of Penguli. It was a joint feast for the two given by their respective parents, and had been postponed because Ladawin, who is a potential and the preferred mate for Sapirosch, has been absent at the distant village of Karu. Sapirosch is the daughter of Ladawin's cross-cousin, which makes her his preferred mate. Whether they marry or not, they call each other by the term for husband and wife, *tumbo* and *malis*. Upon his return to Lesu preparations for the feast, which will be held the next day, are begun. The men of the hamlet go fishing and prepare their catch, and the women bring in taro from their gardens and prepare it to be baked in the *liga*. The next day the feast is held. The men eat in the cemetery. All the Hawk men eat the food prepared by the Eagle women, and they are in some subtle way supposed to be eating with Sapirosch, who is Eagle. Similarly, the Eagle men eat the food prepared by the Hawk women, and are supposed to be eating with Linga, who is Hawk. The feast is not taken too seriously. It is called *oning tsnintset*, literally eat play, i.e. a playful feast. [831] The Hawk men say playfully to Sapirosch, "Why have you not prepared food for us, when you have already shown us your vulva?" The Eagle men say the same to Linga. [582] Theoretically, all the men of the opposite moiety are possible mates for the two little girls, and the feast is held for all of them, but it is particularly for those who stand in the relationship of the preferred mate.

While the men are eating in the cemetery, the women eat more casually on the beach. The Eagle women eat the food prepared by the Hawk women, and *vice versa*.[1]

854 It is not only through the performance of the proper rites 834 and by feeding and caring for the infant that the duties of

[1] I was told that a similar feast was held for the possible mates of a little boy, but none was held during my visit.

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communal cooking. It is a masculine task to bring in the leaves which are used for wrapping the taro and for covering the *liga*, and in this duty the boys render great assistance. At the feast, when the men were making plans for some communal rites, the speaker told the boys to bring in leaves, and that if they did not they would get nothing to eat. While this was greeted by laughter on the part of the boys, they later hastened to bring in the leaves. A boy is seen carrying a load of leaves bigger than he is, or helping his father clean the fish. He may also shred a coconut, a masculine task. He will watch his father and the other men as they prepare a pig to be baked. A boy of eleven helps his father to clear the bush ground for a new garden, but this is not work that takes up much of his time, for new gardens are not made every day.

The boys share with the girls the duties of taking care of their younger sisters and brothers, but even that leaves them more free time than girls. They frequently stroll through the bush, playing in the water, or on the beach, at the same time looking after their little brothers. I never saw a similar group of girls. These boys have access to the men's house and are present at all the masculine rites and feasts, where they receive their share of the food, listen to the speeches, and witness trading transactions. They are quiet on these occasions, obviously enjoying their food and never interrupting or taking any part in the proceedings. Even their seniors, youths and young men, listen respectfully as the old men talk. The fact that the boys of a village are circumcised together when they are about eight or ten years of age, that they then spend several months excluded from all females, that after this they sleep in the men's house, must help to set this pattern of age grouping among them.[1] There is no similar rite for any group of girls.

Within a group of boys, one often finds a pairing off of two boys and the formation of particular friendships. This occurs

[1] The circumcision rites will be described in the following chapter.